

Memo

Date: December 6th, 2022

To: Office of Housing 2022 Multifamily NOFA Advisory Committee

From: Maiko Winkler-Chin, Director
Laurie Olson, Capital Investments Manager

Subject: Africatown Community Land Trust - Keiro

The Africatown Community Land Trust (ACLT) is requesting \$17,276,765.00 in permanent financing to develop Keiro in the Central District neighborhood of Seattle. ACLT plans to construct a 4 building complex that is made up of a 5-story, 6-story, 7-story, and an 8 story building that will consist of 238 units and a commercial space that is designated for a early childhood learning center. The proposed unit mix consists of 46 - studio, 170 - one bedroom, and 22 - two bedroom units and will be for individuals and families earning up to 60% of area median income; less than 10% of these units are proposed to be family-sized units.

Located on 16th and Yesler, Keiro will replace the existing building that was formally occupied by the Keiro Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and is currently being operated as a homeless shelter. The site is adjacent to Langston Hughes Center for the Performing Arts and Wisteria Park and down the street from Douglass-Truth Library. The site sits on a major bus line that goes directly into Downtown as well as walking distance to the Seattle Streetcar for access into the International District, First Hill, and Capital Hill.

Given the historical significance of this site, community engagement, involvement, and approval will be a must throughout the design process. ACLT has held 3 community meetings. 2 meetings to address community needs and 1 meeting to reveal the architectural design. From these meetings, ACLT highlighted the need for health care services, celebrating history of community members, communal spaces for gathering, education, and building community, integration of art, common area incorporating nature and water features, space for black businesses, high quality design, family sized units, honoring history, and architecturally fit in with the character of the neighborhood.

The Office of Housing is not recommending this project in 2022 for the following reasons:

- In the 2022 fall round, the Office of Housing does not have sufficient resources to consider all requests. The current ACLT request to OH is \$17+ million. OH has a total budget of \$_____ This fall round.
- The current scope of this project consists of 4 buildings which we feel will bring not only inefficiencies in construction but also maintenance, energy usage, and functionality throughout the life of these buildings. Our recommendation is for two (or one) building(s) instead of 4 for added efficiency gains in both construction and operations.
- Lack of family sized units given the design is to include an early learning child center. The neighborhood has 4 childcare centers within a 4 block radius of the site. The building's amenities

should also look to service its housed population. Family sized units was also brought up in their community engagement meetings.

- Throughout ACLT's narrative they mention senior housing but in their actual application senior housing was omitted from their application. A more definitive and decisive argument for or against inputting senior housing is needed by OH.
- While it is not ACLT's intention to operate Keiro as a homeless shelter, they are fulfilling a service that is greatly needed in the area. Current residents use Keiro as temporary housing until they find permanent housing. A concrete alternative will need to be found to fill this gap when the time comes that Keiro will no longer operate as a homeless shelter.
- Given this history and media surrounding this site, a higher level of community engagement and involvement is needed. OH would like ACLT to outline their methods to get community involvement and how certain members are chosen. In ACLT's next application it should be obvious that the communities needs and concerns have been addressed and to demonstrate community approval of the planned design and functionality.
- Additional time will allow ACLT to redesign the project to be more efficient in it's build and function once operational.
- Finally, OH hopes to work with ACLT to not only provide affordable housing for the community but also a design that reflects needs and wants of the community they are serving.